



WEST MULTNOMAH
Soil & Water Conservation District

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee
(Long Range Business Plan Special Meeting)**

12 pm – 2 pm, Wednesday, October 23, 2019

West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District Office, Conference Room
2701 NW Vaughn Street – Suite 450, Portland, Oregon 97210

AGENDA

12 pm – Welcome/check-in/announcements – Susan/All

12:10 pm – Approval of September 25th meeting summary & financials review – Scott/All

12:20 pm – Community outreach & engagement plan brainstorm – Mary/All

1:10 pm – Equity lens plan feedback – Mary/All

1:35 pm – LRBP response to the “Whose Land” narrative – Mary/All

1:55 pm – Action items review – Scott/All

2 pm – Adjourn

**DRAFT -- WMSWCD Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee Meeting Summary – DRAFT
September 25, 2019 Noon to 2:00 pm, WMSWCD Office**

Attending: Scott Gall, Susan Weedall (Co-Chairs); Michael Ahr, Jim Cathcart, Indi Keith, Mary Logalbo, Sam Mularz, Randi Razalenti, Laura Taylor.

Welcome/Check-In/Equity Shares -- The following announcements were shared.

- Mary -- Weston Miller plans on using City of Portland's Office of Equity and Human Rights to conduct Equity 101 training for Oregon State University **Extension Service** staff. Recall, we used Koffi Dessou and Judith Mowry from this Office to conduct our own, very successful, Equity 101 training for Board and staff.
- Sam -- Will be starting a new job at City of Portland Oregon Community Gardens -- a subdivision of Portland Parks and Recreation. Equity has become a focus for this program -- the need to establish community gardens in historically underserved areas. Excited about this work.
- Susan -- In Susan's world of physical therapy, more and more conversations are being held around gender, LGBTQ and cultural awareness training. Susan is a member of the Oregon Physical Therapy Association's Cultural Minority Affairs committee and will be attending a Cultural Competency discussion forum on Saturday, September 28th -- which will prevent Susan from being at the Sauvie Island Jubilee in the morning.

Approval of the August 14, 2019 Meeting Summary -- Mary referenced that she has more detail about the Long Range Business Plan Update process exercise the Committee went through at the August 14th meeting than what was captured in the meeting summary and wants to know if that detail needs to be captured and made part of the public record. **The Committee agreed that it did as an attachment to the final meeting summary.** With this addition, the summary as distributed for this meeting was approved.

Review of Organizational DEI Goals and Provide Recommendation to the Board -- See attached 3 page original document, *"WMSWCD Diversity, Equity & Inclusions Goals, Strategies & Objectives Explained"*. These were developed by a sub-group of the Committee during a separate meeting held on February 19, 2019. The goals were first presented to the Board at their May 8, 2019 meeting. The feeling is that the goals did not get much traction with the Board and as such the goals need to be resubmitted and more space provided so the Board could take ownership of the Goals. Given that, the question now is to confirm whether the Committee comfortable with the goals? Scott drew attention to the Overarching Goals and then the goals specific to race -- which come across very similarly. The Committee discussed is whether these two sets of goals could be streamlined. The Committee agreed to introduce the Overarching Goals first and then introduce the emphasis on centering on race initially when addressing these goals. Given this change, one could interpret that the overarching goals would first be applied to race without having to explicitly modify those goals to address race.

The Committee felt the overarching goal for equity accountability should be modified to include an introspection component that would explicitly include the "Whose Land Is Our Land" work to be featured at the Sauvie Island Jubilee. **Action:** *Scott to update the "WMSWCD Diversity, Equity & Inclusions Goals, Strategies & Objectives Explained" document to reflect the needed changes identified by the Committee.*

Discuss "Literature Review: Historical Barriers/Issues around Landownership & Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs)" -- **See attached, Executive Summary -- Whose Land is Our Land?** The District has a responsibility to understand these issues because their impacts are still present today. Also, more importantly, what is it the District can do to reverse these impacts? Our actions need to be just a deliberate and impactful so as to stem this inertia. The outcome of these policies was to force communities of color to live in the least undesirable areas in terms of environmental health and ownership. Basically, now that we are aware of what happened, the concern is that business as usual for the District may result in reinforcing these disparities. The question then is how does the District respond to this and what to do differently? The timing is good because the conversation should enter the discussions around updating our Long Range Business Plan.

Present Updated WMSWCD Equity Lens -- Susan and Jim gave the Committee a rundown on why the lens needed to be updated. The new version of the lens being proposed (copy attached). The updated lens is organized around 5 components: (1) Identify Issue, (2) Evaluate, (3) Reassess/Analyze, (4) Confirm and (5) Reflect. It is very likely that most applications of the lens will go through the first 3 components only as it is likely that the evaluation component will identify needed changes in the policy, program, practice and/or decision the lens is being applied to. For example, perhaps not all voices have been heard and need to be heard. Perhaps the assumptions brought to the table are leading to unintended consequences. If these outcomes are identified, then there will be a need to revisit and make changes to the policy, program, practice and/or decision being evaluated. Once this is done, then

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the lens is structured to evaluate the amended policy, program, practice and/or decision being evaluated using the fourth component of the lens – Confirm. Component 5 – Reflect – can be run through more than once. For example, the group applying the lens could reflect after completing components (1) through (3) and recognizing the need to revisit the policy, program, practice and/or decision being evaluated; and again after the application of component (4) – Confirm - to the modified policy, program, practice and/or decision.

Equity Lens Exercise – Hiring Practices: Value of Lived as well as Professional DEI Experience when Evaluating Candidates – The decision on which the Committee applied the lens to is that we don't call for candidates sharing their lived experience in our hiring process and value this experience in our scoring of the strengths of a candidate. One assumption is that candidates will be comfortable with sharing this information. A fear could be is that by sharing, the District could discriminate against them based on what was shared. Another assumption is that the candidate wants their lived experience to be part of their experience with the agency. That may not be the case. The desired equitable outcomes from including lived experience in the hiring process is to promote a more diverse applicant pool and achieving a greater likelihood of hiring a diverse candidate. The Committee recognized that the proposal to include lived experience in the selection of candidates needs to be reassessed and analyzed further. **Action** – *Laura to develop a complete proposal for how to include and score lived experience in the hiring process (in general – not just with respect to the filling of the Field and Field/GIS positions) and then schedule an off-line meeting to apply the lens to that complete proposal. Participants to be determined.*

Long Range Business Plan (LRBP) – Update on Community Engagement Plan and Placement of Equity Pauses – The focus of the Committee's discussion was on identifying the equity pauses where the District might wish to have a facilitator for this application of the equity lens – the likely person to hire would be Cliff Jones of Capacity Building Partnerships due to Cliff's familiarity with the District's work. The Committee also discussed the idea of hiring Cliff to hold a train the trainer for facilitating the application of the lens to the key pauses in the update process where an outside facilitator would not be used. The audience for this training would be the Team Members for each of the conversations – Scope, Financial Sustainability and Organizational Structure. The Committee then reviewed of the LRBP Update process as documented in "*WMSWCD Diversity, Equity & Inclusions Goals, Strategies & Objectives Explained*". When should we use an external facilitator? When should we use a trained internal facilitator? Mary updated the Committee on the Community Engagement Liaison (CEL) process. PK International is now under contract and is in the process of identifying the CELs and the communities they will be engaged with.

Action Item Review –

- Rework the goals document – Scott Gall
- Schedule more time to discuss response to Indi's work – Scott Gall and Susan Weedall
- Laura to move forward with developing the lived experience proposal for the District's hiring practices and scheduling a second application of the equity lens to this proposal off-line from the Committee.

Next Meeting: Next regular meeting is Noon to 2:00 pm, October 23rd (LRBP focus). November meeting is November 27th (day before the Thanksgiving Holiday). The December meeting is December 18th (LRBP focus).

Initial notes taken by Jim Cathcart, September 25, 2019. Finalized as a review draft by Jim Cathcart, October 16, 2019.

DEI

Item	2015-16 Adopted Budget	2016-17 Adopted Budget	2017-18 Adopted Budget	2018-19 Adopted Budget	Original 2019-20 Proposed Budget	Revised 2019-20 Proposed Budget	Change	Program Cuts	Goal Supported
Organizational Development & Training	0	4,400	500	1,000	5,000	5,000	4,000		All Goals
Contracted Services for Additional Demographics Data Planning & Collection	0	2,000	5,000	5,000	10,000	0	(5,000)	(10,000)	All Goals
Contracted Services for Equity Lens Implimentation (Includes review of Long Range Business Plan, Policies and Financial Plan)	0	1,600	0	2,500	4,000	4,000	1,500		All Goals
Contractor & Community Organization Services for Culturally Relevant Program Materials Research & Development (*May include survey work, translation services and/or novel materials creation)	0	2,000	0	0		0	0		All Goals
Contractor &/or Community Organization Services for Requested Translation Services					2,000	2,000			All Goals
Contracted Services for Natural Resource Career Mentoring (Youth Mentoring Collaborative)			1,000	500	0	0	(500)		All Goals
Contractes Services for Partnership Development & Engagemnt (Community Liaison Leaders Input)					5,000	0	0	(5,000)	All Goals
DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION PROJECTS TOTAL	0	10,000	6,500	9,000	26,000	11,000	2,000		

Community Outreach & Engagement Plan

Plan Purpose:

This plan will reach out to those we've been working with and those we haven't yet worked with (but hope to) through a community engagement process that reviews WMSWCD's conservation scope (this includes our mission, vision, goals & delivery methods), with Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) as a foundational and ingrained value of our work, to identify opportunities, barriers, relevancy and priorities to integrate into our LRBP update. This review of WMSWCD's Conservation Scope will feed into an updated Long Range Business Plan to guide the District in carrying out its mission over the next five years.

Plan Design Principals:

- **Adaptability & Co-Designing:** Community engagement works best where it is an ongoing cumulative process enabling relationships and trust to build and strengthen over time. Individual engagement events will be planned and designed with this in mind and aim to contribute to the overall aims of the engagement process. Community or voluntary groups or individuals may want to participate at a range of levels – from providing advice to co-designing the process and from undertaking some aspects of the engagement to delivering projects to meet some of the outcomes. While this document aims to provide an overall framework, the need to stay flexible and allow for those interested to engage at their desired levels and help mold that engagement requires continued review and adaption to accommodate meaningful engagement opportunities. It will be essential to utilize a range of mechanisms and avenues to facilitate the widest possible participation from the diverse array of stakeholders we wish to engage with and to intentionally plan for communities that have been historically marginalized.
- **Intentional Engagement:** The emphasis on ingraining DEI values into this design will include intentional and targeted stakeholder engagement methods and roles to meaningfully include and focus on people of color, in alignment with our District Racial Equity Statement, in the development of this plan, our conservation scope and our Long Range Business Plan update overall. The need to ensure rural and urban residents and land managers (both those we've worked with and those we haven't) are engaged will also be important to carrying out a successful and inclusive community engagement plan.
- **Equity Pauses:** At regular intervals, staff will help facilitate "step back" reviews of issues, opportunities and direction emerging from the process, and self-critique (if feasible w/ stakeholders as well) on level and effectiveness of DEI engagement and interpretation.

Stakeholders Engagement Methods:

For those we have a relationship with (beneficiaries and partners including residents, landowners & organizational partners), the following engagement methodologies are recommended:

- Staff (and potentially board) led interviews
 - Interviewees will be initially selected by a mix of strategic selection and random stratification to better ensure we are hearing from a diversity of perspectives and voices from both rural and urban realms.
- Online surveys

- Openly accessible surveys will be used throughout the phases to gather anonymous input from stakeholders.
- Focal groups
 - Focus groups will be held at pre-existing community spaces/meetings with an intentional plan that sets out to hear from a diversity of perspectives and voices from both rural and urban realms.
- Open house review and input
 - Community input on the draft LRBP Outline will be conducted via an open house format.
- Potential scope conversation participants
 - Facilitated meetings (community conversations) will address questions about current, short and long-term needs, goals and challenges of WMSWCD focused on each theme with DEI as an ingrained value.

For those we don't yet have a relationship with, but hope to (with an emphasis on historically underserved communities of color and urban and rural residents we've not yet engaged with) the following methodologies are recommended:


- A community liaison team will be organized & hired (through the Community Engagement Liaison services program, "CELs") to engage and outreach to historically underserved racial and ethnic community members. Community liaisons will advise on conservation scope, engagement strategies, lead/deliver community survey/interview efforts, assist with outreach and recruitment for focal groups and participation in scoping conversations.
- Liaison (and potentially board) led interviews
 - Liaison-led stakeholders and community member interviews will be strategically conducted to proactively seek out voices from those that are historically underserved and/or marginalized.
 - Board-led interviews will be strategically conducted to hear from community members and/or organizations we've not yet worked with, but are interested in pursuing a relationship with.
- Online surveys
 - Openly accessible surveys will be used throughout the phases to gather anonymous input from stakeholders.
- Focal groups
 - Focus groups will be held at pre-existing community spaces/meetings and organized by the District to hear directly from those the CELs have reached with an intentional plan that sets out to hear from a diversity of perspectives and voices from both rural and urban realms.
- Open house
 - Community input on the draft LRBP Outline will be conducted via an open house format.
- Potential scoping conversation participants
 - Facilitated meetings (community conversations) will address questions about current, short and long-term needs, goals and challenges of WMSWCD focused on each theme with DEI as an ingrained value.

Phased Timeline (Phases aligned with the broader *LRBP Update Strategy Timeline*)


Phase 1. Foundational Assessment, September – December 2019

- For those we have a relationship with initial questions and conversations will focus on strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats in regards to WMSWCD’s conservation scope, with DEI as a foundational and ingrained value of our work.
 - Methods at this stage include staff led interviews, online surveys and focus groups.
 - Focus groups will be held at pre-existing community spaces/meetings with an intentional plan that sets out to hear from a diversity of perspectives and voices from both rural and urban realms.
- For those we don’t yet have a relationship with, questions will focus on overall engagement strategies as well as conservation scope opportunities, barriers, relevancy and priorities.
 - Methods at this stage include liaison led interview, online surveys and focus groups.
 - Focus groups will be held at pre-existing community spaces/meetings with an intentional plan that sets out to hear from a diversity of perspectives and voices from both rural and urban realms.


Phase 2.1 & 2.2 Form Theme Groups, Plan & Hold Conversations, December – May 2020)

- In forming & planning theme groups questions in this stage will shift focus, for all stakeholder groups, from what our current conservation scope is to what our future scope *could/should be* to best achieve our affirmed or modified mission and vision.
 - Methods at this stage include online surveys, potential additional focal groups, and community conversations (details below).
 - Key decisions on what questions to ask in conversations with staff, board and stakeholders and who should be participating in these conversations will be solidified with community input and consideration.
 -  **PRIOR TO MOVING TO THE NEXT PHASE CONDUCT EQUITY LENS REVIEW ON CONVERSATION PARTICIPANTS & SELECTED QUESTIONS.**
- Facilitated meetings (community conversations) will address questions about current, short and long-term needs, goals and challenges of WMSWCD focused on each theme with DEI as an ingrained value. At least three meetings focused on the District’s Conservation Scope is anticipated, but the planning team might elect to hold more. These will be phased so that other theme teams may respond to one another and integrated suggestions from each other. The values of DEI are expected to be integrated and embedded into these theme conversations and further reviewed during equity pauses and lens reviews. Outcomes of each group session would include one or more of the following:
 - Conclusions/recommendations on direction and priority for the LRBP
 - Proposed new direction and language for the mission and vision
 - Requests for additional information
 - Guidance on research or assessment efforts
 - Questions, ramifications and/or suggestions for other Theme Conversation Groups
 - Additional topics to be taken up at future meetings

Phase 2.4 Consolidate Input and Draft LRBP Outline (June – August 2020)

- The project manager will work with the members of the community engagement process, theme teams and conversation groups to synthesize input, updated mission and vision, discoveries and recommendations gained through the plan development into a high-level outline. The outline will then be reviewed and refined until it is solid and endorsed by the District's staff & board and can be expressed in the actual LRBP document.
- A draft outline will first be shared with community members via CELs focal group and online platforms to gather responses to the LRBP update.
 -  CONDUCT AN EQUITY PAUSE OR LENS REVIEW TO EXAMINE IF EQUITY AND INCLUSION IS CLEARLY AN INGRAINED VALUE IN THE UPDATED DRAFT (IDEALLY WITH CELs INVOLVEMENT).

Phase 3.2 LRBP Draft Review and Finalize Plan (October – December 2020)

- After the draft document is acceptable to District staff & board, broader feedback from stakeholders will be pursued. The work of getting and incorporating broader perspectives will be important in this step as it has been in those prior. This feedback effort may include, but not be limited to, focused discussions, surveys and/or a public comment period for the draft plan.
- An open house sharing the draft and inviting further feedback as well as additional potential focal groups, conversations and online surveying may be pursued.
 -  PRIOR TO FINALIZING THE DRAFT CONDUCT AN EQUITY LENS REVIEW ON RESPONSIVENESS TO COMMUNITY INPUT (IDEALLY WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN LENS IMPLEMENTATION).

Phases 3.3 Plan Release, Communication and Outreach (January 2021 – October 2021)

- Preparing and distributing the final plan to the various engaged stakeholders and the general public should be considered. The release of the LRBP should be celebrated not as the end, but rather a beginning!
- LRBP is shared broadly with communication strategies developed throughout the planning process.
 - A gathering is held to release the plan and celebrate with partners.

About the Community Engagement Liaisons (CELs) Team

The liaisons are active community leaders or activists that are passionate about supporting and improving their community's visibility and welfare. The majority of them (95%) are immigrants and people of color who are fluent in their native language(s) and active in their local community. Liaisons have consistently demonstrated professionalism, cultural understanding, and effective engagement with the underserved community groups that allow many city bureaus to serve broader range of residents and move forward with various planning. CELs liaisons are English-fluent, civic activists and are respected elders or activists in their respective communities they nurture.

CELs that have connections and/or reside within the District service area would be the most desirable since we are trying to reach out to our constituents as well as understand broader cultural concerns and issues to consider. In addition, a desire to reach out and engage with people from both urban and rural areas should be considered in the selection of the CELs.

For this process, CELs for the following communities will comprise the CEL Team. The communities selected are found to reside in the WMSWCD service area, according to the most recent, but dated, census and school data after a 2017 Demographic Data Analysis completed by Metro's Research Center. The following list of communities was further refined and vetted by Ping Khaw who will be securing the CELs discussed:

- Arabic
- Black or African American
- Chinese
- Latinx (Spanish translation ability in written and verbal forms is required due to LEP data)
- Native American
- Slavic
- Somali
- Vietnamese

An excerpt from Metro's 2019 Connect with Nature Report supporting our proactive strategy:

People of color are excluded from participating in community and government decision making and policy development.

Not sharing in the benefits of the region's parks and natural areas is just one way that people of color suffer from historic and ongoing racism built into the structures of government. People of color also experience the worst outcomes in nearly every category of social well-being, including housing, transportation, access to nature, education and health.⁶

These outcomes are a direct result of a long history of governments intentionally excluding people of color from opportunities for land ownership and participation in society and decision making. From forcibly occupying Indigenous lands to constitutional prohibitions against Black residents and racebased immigration restrictions, government has long marginalized people of color.

Today, the outcome of that history is that decision-makers and those who influence decisions continue to be disproportionately white, well-educated and well-off. This inherited privilege created a current system that is not changing quickly enough to enable all people of color to easily and meaningfully participate. Today, the most impacted communities still have little power to change systems that continue to exclude them and impact their everyday life and wellbeing.

Equitable participation in government is critical to effectively serving all people and equitable participation in the planning of parks and natural areas is critical to creating a parks and nature system that effectively serves all communities. It is inefficient and unjust to exclude any members of the public from participation. While laws may have changed, past history continues to impact the lived experience, representation and participation of people of color today.

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